



May 11, 2006

Dear Community Friends;

Highlight On Rainier Beach

Rainier Beach, particularly the area of Rainier Ave. S. & S. Henderson Street, has been a hot spot of crime & disorder issues for some time. We have encountered gang activity, narcotics, person-to-person violence, fight disturbances, robbery, shoplifting.... In short, our officers spend a lot of time at and around that intersection.

Many of the issues of concern involve the youth in our community. With the library, a community center and swimming pool, sports fields and ball courts, two high schools and an elementary school, and several major bus routes that transit that area, there are a lot of young people who congregate in this area. And while the vast majority of our youth go to school, use the library and do the right thing, there are a few troublemakers – as there are in any community.

Library and community center staffs relayed to us that some youth would enter their facilities and basically "take over." Some were so disruptive that were excluded from the use of these facilities. Officers were often called to remove unruly youth whose behavior was threatening to other library and community center patrons. Library patrons in particular felt so threatened that they stopped going to the Rainier Beach branch and went to other libraries outside of the community.

Rainier Beach Foot Beat

To address the concerns, the South Precinct has initiated a foot patrol of the Rainier & Henderson area, in addition to our regular patrol officers assigned to the area. These foot beat officers patrol during the late afternoon-early evening hours on random days. They spend time interacting with youth and staff at the community center and library, touch base with area businesses, and

interact with youth on the street. These officers carry out enforcement actions when necessary, but they are there mainly as a highly visible presence and resource for the youth, business people and area residents. We have seen that their presence has made a difference.

The foot beat is funded by the on-going Weed & Seed effort in Southeast Seattle. Since the initiation of the foot beat, library and community center staffs report a decrease in incidents of disorder and unruly behaviors.

Community Involvement

The foot beat has yielded positive results. Yet, law enforcement action alone cannot address the concerns mentioned above. One thing that can is community involvement that provides and supports positive structured activities for our youth.

There are a number of community driven efforts in the Rainier Beach community, such as those undertaken by the Rainier Beach Merchants Association and the Rainier Beach Community Empowerment Coalition. We encourage you to find out more and participate in their efforts. Additionally, the library and community center always need responsible, caring adult participation and volunteerism. You can have an impact by getting actively involved in the lives of young people.

- Rainier Beach Merchants Association: contact Dr. Douglas Young (Rainier Beach Veterinary Hospital); 206.722.3661
- Rainier Beach Community Empowerment Coalition: contact Gregory Davis; 206.216.4167
- Rainier Beach Community Center: contact Cindy Thornton; 206.386.1925
- Rainier Beach Library: contact Branch Manager Daria Cal; 206.386.1906

Until next time, Take Care and Stay Safe!

Mark Solomon, South Precinct Crime Prevention